

Message Text

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PAGE 01 NEW DE 04416 021842Z

60

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 DRC-01 /073 W

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R 021600Z APR 74

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0612

INFO USIA WASHDC

DOD

CINCPAC

AMCONSUL BOMBAY

AMCONSUL CALCUTTA

AMCONSUL MADRAS

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE NEW DELHI 4416

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOCI, PFOR, IN

SUBJECT: SIKHS IN THE US ARMED FORCES

REF: NEW DELHI 3904 (NOTAL)

1. ADDRESSEES WILL RECALL THE FUROR AROUSED HERE BY THE COURTS-MARTIAL LAST FALL OF US ARMY PFC'S BROADWELL AND FRESCO, RECENT CONVERTS TO THE SIKH RELIGION, FOR THEIR FAILURE TO OBEY ORDERS THAT THEY SHAVE THEIR BEARDS AND REMOVE THEIR TURBANS TO CONFORM WITH ARMY DRESS REGULATIONS. THE EMBASSY (AND THE WHITE HOUSE) RECEIVED NUMEROUS LETTERS OF COMPLAINT; ONE SIKH DELEGATION CAMPED AT THE EMBASSY ENTRANCE. THE SUBSEQUENT ACQUITTAL ON CONSTITUTIONAL GROUNDS OF PFC MCNAIR, WHO HAD BEEN SIMILARLY CHARGED, AND THE ARMY ANNOUNCEMENT THAT IT WAS REVIEWING ITS REGULATIONS ON SERVICE BY SIKHS WERE USED BY THIS EMBASSY IN RESPONDING TO THE PROTEST LETTERS AND RESOLUTIONS. SEVERAL SIKH GROUPS RESPONDED FAVORABLY.TFIF
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PAGE 02 NEW DE 04416 021842Z

THE SENTENCING OF US NAVY SEAMAN CHARLES R. WOOLSON TO

THREE DAYS IN THE BRIG FOR REFUSING TO OBEY AN ORDER TO REMOVE HIS TURBAN (REFTEL) SURFACES IN THE LOCAL PRESS, OUR CREDIBILITY WITH THE SIKH COMMUNITY HERE WILL FOUNDER.

2. IT IS THEREFORE IMPORTANT TO US THAT THE REVIEW OF THE REGULATIONS PROCEED WITH DUE SPEED. COL MORRISON'S DECISION IN THRMCAIR CASE LENDS FURTHER URGENCY TO DOD'S DELIBERATIONS. SIKHS CONSTITUTE INFLUENTIAL PORTION OF THE NORTH INDIAN POPULATION, AND AN EVEN MORE IMPORTANT ELEMENT IN THE INDIAN ARMY IN WHICH THEY HAVE SERVED WITH PARTICULAR DISTINCTION THROUGH THE YEARS. WE DO NOT WISH NEEDLESSLY TO OFFEND THEM.
SCHNEIDER

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